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SUBJECT: BIOTECHNOLOGY CORN EVENT DEMARCHE

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11. FAS Agricultural Counselor delivered reftel demarche on Pioneer and Syngenta GMO corn hybrid approvals at the Ministry of Environment, February 20, 2009, meeting with New Technologies Department Director, Agnieszka Dalbiak. Dalbiak said Poland has not decided how it will vote on February 25 in Brussels on the new biotechnology events. Director Dalbiak commented the possibility of WTO trade sanctions was clear and responded affirmatively when AgCouns asked if Poland might abstain.

12. EconOff delivered demarche February 19 to Poland's representative to the Section 133 committee, Mieczyslaw Nogaj, of the Ministry of Economy. The Econ Ministry had no immediate reply.

13. FAS Agricultural Attach delivered demarche to Malgorzata Surawska, Director of the Plant Breeding and Protection Department, Polish Ministry of Agriculture on February 23. No response was offered. Neither Director Surawska nor other agriculture contacts were available for an in-person meeting until later in the week.

14. Comment: Post will follow-up to obtain information on Poland's decision and details of a law on cultivating genetically modified crops now being drafted. However, Poland's established policy to vote against approval of all GMO varieties remains in effect, and we expect it to follow that policy and vote against the approvals during this vote as well. Nevertheless, Director Dalbiak's comment that Poland might abstain shows Poland at least is having an internal debate on biotech. Decision makers have a greater appreciation that their actions have consequences after facing a large retaliation sanction in the WTO beef hormone case. End Comment.

QUANRUD